



611 West Ottawa Street, 4th Floor, PO Box 30004, Lansing, Michigan 48909 • P: (517) 373-6234 F: (517) 373-4648

Rapid Response Fact Sheet

What is the Rapid Response Team?

The Rapid Response Team of the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth receives plant closing/mass layoff notices required under the federal Worker Adjustment Retraining Notification (WARN) Act from employers.

The Rapid Response Team is required under the federal Workforce Investment Act to respond to WARN notices and initiates Rapid Response Team meetings in response to any information received concerning a business closing or layoff including news articles and phone tips.

Rapid Response Team Facts

- Rapid Response has overseen Michigan's dislocated worker program since 1986.
- Director of unit is Chong-Anna Canfora and includes a staff of five.
- Unit responds to all mass layoffs and plant closures that dislocate 50+ workers at firms with 100+ employees.

What is a Rapid Response Team Meeting?

The Rapid Response Team meeting involves a mix of state agencies and local service providers, the private sector and organized labor (if employees are covered by a collective bargaining agreement). In addition to a Rapid Response workforce consultant and a representative from the local Michigan Works Agency (MWA), the Rapid Response Team may include representatives from Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA), Human Resource Development, Inc., the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, No Worker Left Behind, and Trade Adjustment Assistance. (Not an all inclusive list).

Objectives of the Rapid Response Meeting

- Determine the current situation of the employer and employees;
- Obtain information about the characteristics of the workforce (e.g., education level, skill level, barriers to re-employment);
- Determine what services are needed by the employees and what is being offered by the employer (and union, if applicable);
- Provide an overview of available dislocated worker services; provide general information about unemployment benefits;
- Provide information on available delivery systems, including Joint Adjustment Committees (JACs), worker orientation (information) meetings, and Michigan Works! One-Stop Service Centers (JACs are labor management committees facilitated by the RR Section to help provide worker adjustment services.);
- Determine the sources and amounts of funding that are available and discuss need for State Adjustment Grant (SAG). If local formula funding is insufficient to support the level of services deemed necessary for a particular closing or layoff situation, the Workforce Consultant will determine if the local MWA will receive additional funding;



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Objectives of the Rapid Response Meeting Continued

- Determine responsibilities of the parties for carrying out various aspects of the agreed upon adjustment program.

Rapid Response Section Mission

- Coordinate an effective state response to layoffs and plant closures by leading partnerships of state agencies, MWAs, employers, labor & local leaders and groups to:
 - Help workers access all necessary services to stay healthy, stay afloat, & gain new skills and new jobs.
 - Prevent layoffs where possible.

Other Rapid Response Section Functions

- Maintain the statewide WARN database and provide information in response to queries (Freedom of Information Act requests, legislative and executive office inquiries, etc.).
- Provide training and technical assistance for the field (MWAs, UIA, contractors, etc.) and for JACs.
- Provide referrals for layoff aversion services.

A recent example of a Rapid Response intervention:

- We just concluded a project in Gladwin, Michigan for workers who were laid off because of the plant closure of Dura Automotive, which was one of the largest employers in the area.
- Rapid Response initiated a Peer to Peer program that empowers workers to help their co-workers by temporarily hiring a few them to serve as peer counselors.
- These Peer counselors performed outreach to their co-workers, draw them into the service centers and educate them about all of the various dislocated worker services and training options that are available to them.
- We also formed a Worker Transition committee of workers and representatives from the company that worked with the Peer counselors and performed aggressive outreach to the affected workers – they held numerous orientations, and resource workshops for their co-workers to help arm them with information and ease their transition.
- Since the final layoff date of October 30, one-third of the workers are already engaged in the transition process by becoming either re-employed, enrolled in school or are actively taking advantage of services to be assessed for re-training and re-employment. The other workers are conducting independent job searches and are weighing their options. This plant was certified under the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act and many of the workers are expected to access the income assistance, training dollars and health care tax credits associated with this program.

To obtain more information about the Rapid Response Unit or available services, please call (517) 373-6234.